

2025

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1
SOUTHEAST GEORGIA REGION

UPDATE

Appling
Bacon
Brantley
Bryan
Camden
Charlton
Chatham
Effingham

Glynn
Liberty
Long
McIntosh
Pierce
Ware
Wayne

Ann R. Purcell
State Transportation Board

I-16 & I-95

GROWING GDOT'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THROUGH INNOVATION

A key component to the Georgia Department of Transportation delivering a safe, efficient and mobile transportation network to the people of Georgia is **innovation**. That was extremely evident in 2025, as the Department successfully leveraged advanced technologies to enhance transportation throughout Georgia. For example, here in Congressional District 1 (CD 1), the department has long been improving freight movement to and from the Port of Savannah by utilizing Vehicle to Everything (V2X) technology. V2X enables data sharing between vehicles, transportation infrastructure, pedestrians and mobile networks to increase road safety, improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. Through this technology, truck drivers are alerted of traffic conditions entering and exiting port facilities. That knowledge improves the movement of freight through the Port of Savannah, benefiting the economic growth of the area and the state.

You can find examples of the department's innovative efforts not just in CD 1, but all throughout the state. The SR 400 Express Lanes Project north of Atlanta, for example, will add new tolled lanes in both directions along a 16-mile stretch from the MARTA North Springs Station to one mile north of McFarland Parkway. Funded by the world's largest Public-Private Partnership (P3) deal, this project sets a new industry standard. For motorists, the SR 400 Express Lanes are projected to reduce delays by over 19,000 hours daily, equating to approximately 15 minutes per traveler.

Whether it is multibillion-dollar infrastructure projects that are designed to improve mobility and save taxpayer dollars, advanced technologies to improve the movement of people and goods through CD 1 or the many infrastructure improvement projects happening daily across the state, Georgia DOT's focus on innovation plays a critical role in planning, designing, constructing, maintaining and improving the 10th largest state transportation network in the nation.

In this annual Georgia DOT update for CD 1, I will highlight some additional innovative transportation infrastructure projects, events and initiatives that the department and I have undertaken in 2025, to promote safe and efficient travel here in CD 1 and across the state. Included in this recap are:

- Georgia's I-95 Widening Project
- Highway Emergency Response Operators returning to 24/7 patrols and full area coverage
- 2025 ITS World Congress
- Brunswick/Glynn County Hurricane Prep Rally
- Congressional District 1 projects

Georgia DOT is committed to ongoing investment in Georgia's infrastructure. In FY 2025, GDOT transportation investments included:

- \$2.1 billion in capital construction
- \$765 million in routine maintenance
- \$576 million in capital maintenance
- \$500 million in freight infrastructure projects

This past year, my term as chair of the State Transportation Board of Georgia came to an end. Serving as chair was a great honor and a tremendous opportunity to help address the needs of CD 1 and the state. Board elections are held annually to ensure all regions of the state are represented at the executive leadership level.

I strongly believe that it is my job as your CD 1 representative to be your voice on the State Transportation Board of Georgia. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding transportation in Georgia or an upcoming/ongoing project in CD 1.

Yours in Service,

Ann Purcell



Ann R. Purcell

Ann R. Purcell

Congressional District 1

(912) 663-8128

State Transportation Board of Georgia

BRUNSWICK, GLYNN COUNTIES HOLD HURRICANE PREP RALLY

As Congressional District 1 residents, we are keenly aware of the devastating impact hurricanes can have on our communities. Georgia DOT - along with all state agencies, local governments and communities, law enforcement agencies and first responders - must be ready and prepared to deal with any dangerous weather conditions which may occur.

At the beginning of hurricane season this year a "Community Hurricane Prep Rally" was held in Brunswick, hosted by the Glynn County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) along with the Brunswick

EMA. This family-friendly event allowed visitors and members of the community to learn about how they can best prepare themselves in the event of potentially severe weather. Georgia DOT representatives met with community members and shared how the department prepares and informs citizens when a storm is approaching.

This community approach to hurricane readiness was a wonderful way to spread the department's message of safety and showcase all the ways Georgia DOT prepares ahead of time to minimize the impact of severe weather on the state.

I'd like to thank Glynn County and Brunswick EMAs for hosting the event and allowing Georgia DOT and me to be a part of it.



ENGINEERING GEORGIA'S 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN ENGINEERING

For the eighth consecutive year, I was honored to be recognized by Engineering Georgia Magazine as one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Engineering in the state of Georgia. The other women who serve on the State Transportation Board (STB): Cathy Williams (Congressional District 2), Stacey Key (Congressional District 5), Emily Dunn (Congressional District 9) and Dana Lemon (Congressional District 13) were also named to the list.

In addition to the STB members, the department was fortunate to have a strong representation throughout the list including Jannine Miller, Director of Planning; Meg Pirkle, Chief Engineer; Angela Whitworth, Treasurer; Hiral Patel, P3 Director; and Kimberly Nesbitt, State Program Delivery Administrator for their achievement. All of these women are truly deserving of this honor for the work they do to provide Georgians with one of the finest transportation systems in the country.

I am humbled to be recognized by Engineering Georgia magazine and proud to be included in a group of remarkable women making a real difference for our state.



GEORGIA AND SOUTH CAROLINA'S I-95 WIDENING PROJECTS



In late summer, Georgia Speaker of the House Jon Burns, Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurry and I were graciously invited to provide remarks at the groundbreaking ceremony for South Carolina DOT's (SCDOT) I-95 Widening project. This project will widen and improve a 10-mile segment of I-95 from the Savannah River to U.S. 278 with the goal of improving capacity, mobility, and operations and to address operational deficiencies for interchanges and bridges within the corridor. I-95 is a critically important eastern corridor for freight and tourist travel. South

Carolina's I-95 Widening project is anticipated to be completed in 2030 and the department is proud to work with SCDOT across state lines to benefit the economies of both states.

I'm proud to report that most segments of I-95 are already widened in Georgia from four to six lanes. And, there is an additional I-95 Widening project scheduled to be let in June 2026. This project proposes to widen I-95 from State Route (SR) 144/ Ford Avenue to SR 21/Augusta Road, expanding the corridor to four lanes in each direction. This project is currently in the early phase with stakeholder coordination underway across agencies to ensure alignment on scope, environmental considerations, and corridor continuity. This strategic enhancement will improve mobility, reduce congestion, and support long-term growth across Bryan and Chatham counties, reflecting our long-range planning and engineering foresight.



RECORD NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS LEADS TO LARGEST GEORGIA DOT INTERN CLASS

Georgia DOT is always looking for ways to encourage and develop the next generation of talented young people. Through our internship program, the department provides college students with opportunities to combine their academic courseload with hands-on working experience and expose students to possibilities for a career in the transportation field. Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurry knows the value of the GDOT internship program firsthand, having started his career at the department as an intern.

Georgia DOT interns work closely with many offices within the department to further their academic and professional growth. They apply their knowledge and insight to Georgia DOT projects in construction, bridge repair, and safety, enhancing both their academic and professional growth.



District 5 2025 Intern Class

This past summer Georgia DOT's internship program had a record breaking 879 applications which resulted in our largest summer intern class of 105 students. Those interns were placed in all seven Georgia DOT districts and 14 offices and represented 26 different schools and universities.



It was my great pleasure to meet some of the interns personally at the GDOT District 5 office. I enjoyed listening to their stories and appreciated the opportunity to impart the knowledge I have acquired over the years to them as they continue their professional development path. I am excited to see the impact these students will have on the transportation system moving forward. And who knows, maybe they'll follow in the footsteps of other notable Georgia DOT interns such as Commissioner McMurry.

HERO RETURNS TO FULL AREA METRO ATLANTA COVERAGE AND 24/7 PATROLS

I'm proud to share that Georgia DOT's HERO (Highway Emergency Response Operator) units returned to round-the-clock patrols and full area coverage on July 1, 2025. Previously, Georgia DOT made the difficult but temporary decision to scale back HERO's long-standing 24-hour presence on metro Atlanta interstates to 5:00 a.m.–11:30 p.m., with on-call support overnight, as public and private workforces navigated post-pandemic hiring and retention challenges.

HEROs have many responsibilities but are primarily responsible for roadway clearance after traffic-related incidents ensuring that normal traffic flow is restored on metro Atlanta interstates while minimizing risk of secondary crashes. Additionally, the program offers free roadside assistance, including assisting stranded motorists with flat tires, dead batteries, and providing fuel or coolant as needed.

Thankfully, during the reduced coverage period, the department's Coordinated Highway Assistance & Maintenance Program (CHAMP) operators - which are responsible for roadway clearance and roadside assistance outside of metro Atlanta including here in CD1 - provided additional support and monitored every interstate. Despite the reduction, from July 2023 through April 2025, HERO and CHAMP provided approximately 135,141 motorist and crash assists across HERO coverage areas.

Although a high level of service was maintained, the department prioritized the need to return the HERO program to 24/7 operations. That process began by focusing on workforce recovery, including new recruitment strategies, enhanced training, and higher starting pay. The partnership between the HERO program and Georgia DOT's Human Resources teams was strong and effective, helping HERO staffing reach near-target levels and enabling this return to full service. I extend my sincere thanks to both of them.

According to HERO Unit Manager Tyrone McCord, the transition has been seamless, with significantly improved response times for late-night and early-morning incidents.

The HERO and CHAMP initiatives are extremely important because they are the department's first and best resource to keep traffic moving safely and efficiently by supporting commuters, freight, and our state's economy. Both HERO and CHAMP operators are known for their calm, courteous customer service when guiding drivers through stressful moments on the road, coordinating traffic control, and providing quick help that gets everyone safely on their way.

CD 1 motorists can take advantage of CHAMP's services by dialing 5-1-1 on their phone or use the 511GA app for free roadside assistance, including flat tires, jump-starting, minor mechanical repairs, or to report an incident.



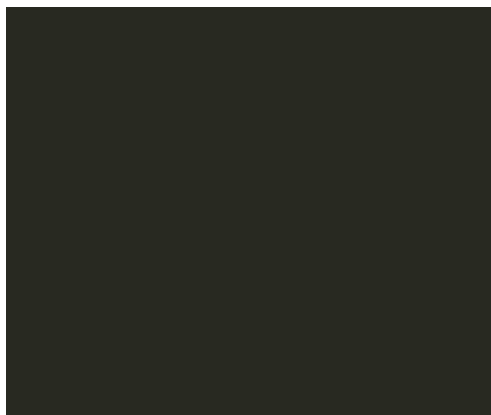
Scan to watch the HERO 24/7 informational video



ITS WORLD CONGRESS

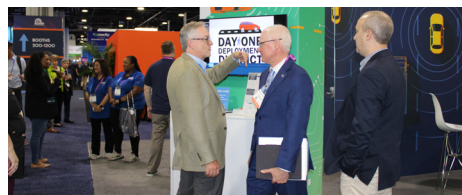
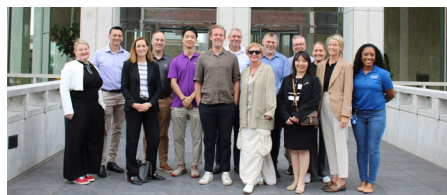
In August, Georgia was proud to host the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) World Congress at the Georgia World Congress Center. With the theme “Deploying Today, Empowering Tomorrow,” ITS World Congress brought together 6,000 public and private sector leaders from 63 countries to advance safer, smarter transportation and global collaboration. The event featured guided tours, plenary sessions, forums and technology demonstrations throughout the week.

Georgia DOT experts participated in panels and sessions that highlighted the department’s investment in ITS innovation. On the Expo floor, thousands of attendees stopped by Georgia DOT’s booth to learn more about the department’s innovative deployments and results. Visitors to department’s Transportation Management Center (TMC) were welcomed to take a tour.



I was especially proud that Commissioner Russell R. McMurry became the first state DOT commissioner to ever receive the ITS Lifetime Achievement Award. It was a well-deserved recognition for his work as a dedicated public servant and visionary leader, and for his commitment to innovation in transportation. He has been instrumental in deploying technology that delivers real benefits for motorists and freight in Georgia and nationwide.

Seeing the department on the world stage affirmed what we know: Georgia’s investments in intelligent transportation are delivering measurable results and everyday value.



ENGINEERING, TRANSPORTATION AND HEALTHCARE AT GAITE STEAM CAMP

It’s never too early to expose children to transportation, and this summer Georgia DOT hosted the Georgia Institute of Transportation Engineers’ (GAITE) second annual STEAM Camp at the Transportation Management Center. In partnership with Grady Hospital and Art It Out Therapy Center, the camp introduced elementary, middle, and high school students to engineering, transportation, and healthcare.

GAITE volunteers and Georgia DOT staff guided 70 students through hands-on tasks. Activities included building traffic signals, design challenges on bridges, crash testing, road repair, and resilient systems. Additionally, the camp featured emergency response tours with Georgia State Patrol, HERO, and Grady.

Participation and reach grew meaningfully from the 2024 inaugural year: Applications rose 20% (100 vs. 80), and female participants increased to 39% from 30%. Thanks to additional scholarships, more children were able to attend.

The program earned the 2025 Southern District ITE Traffic Engineering Award, a well-deserved recognition for an initiative that builds awareness of transportation careers while serving our communities. I was proud to see the next generation inspired at Georgia DOT.

THE I-16/I-75 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN MACON-BIBB COUNTY

The I-16/I-75 Interchange Improvement project is set to boost safety and mobility in Macon and Macon-Bibb County. It involves widening and reconstructing I-75 from Hardeman Avenue to Pierce Avenue and I-16 from I-75 to Walnut Creek. Once complete, this \$620 million investment will enhance the city, Middle Georgia region, and the state's transportation system, supporting Georgia's growing freight and logistics industry that is critically important for Congressional District 1.

Due to its complexity, the I-16/I-75 Improvement projects consist of several phases:

- Phase 1a consisted of improvements to I-16 eastbound between I-75 and Coliseum Drive. This phase was completed in 2023.
- Phase 1b was substantially completed in 2018 and other remaining mitigation improvements were completed last year.
- Phase 2 consists of capacity and operational improvements along I-75 northbound from Hardeman Ave to the southern limit of I-16 interchange. Anticipated completion was late last year.
- Phase 3 consists of capacity and operational improvements along I-75 southbound from the I-16 interchange to Hardeman Avenue, including reconstruction of several ramps within the I-16 / I-75 interchange. Anticipated completion was late last year.
- Phase 4 consists of capacity and operational improvements to almost 3 miles of I-16 eastbound from I-75 to Walnut Creek, including eastbound ramps at Spring Street, Second Street, and Coliseum Drive. Phase 4 also includes conversion of a temporary detour bridge over the Ocmulgee River into a permanent pedestrian 'plaza' complete with landscaping, seating, and shade awnings. The anticipated completion date is fall 2026.
- Phase 5 consists of capacity and operational improvements to I-16 westbound from I-75 to Walnut Creek, including westbound ramps at Spring Street, Second Street, and Coliseum Drive. The anticipated completion date is fall 2026.
- Construction on the last phase, Phase 6, is moving forward ahead of original schedule. It will consist of improvements to I-75 northbound and southbound between the I-16 interchange to Pierce Avenue. Phase 6 is scheduled for completion in late fall 2029.



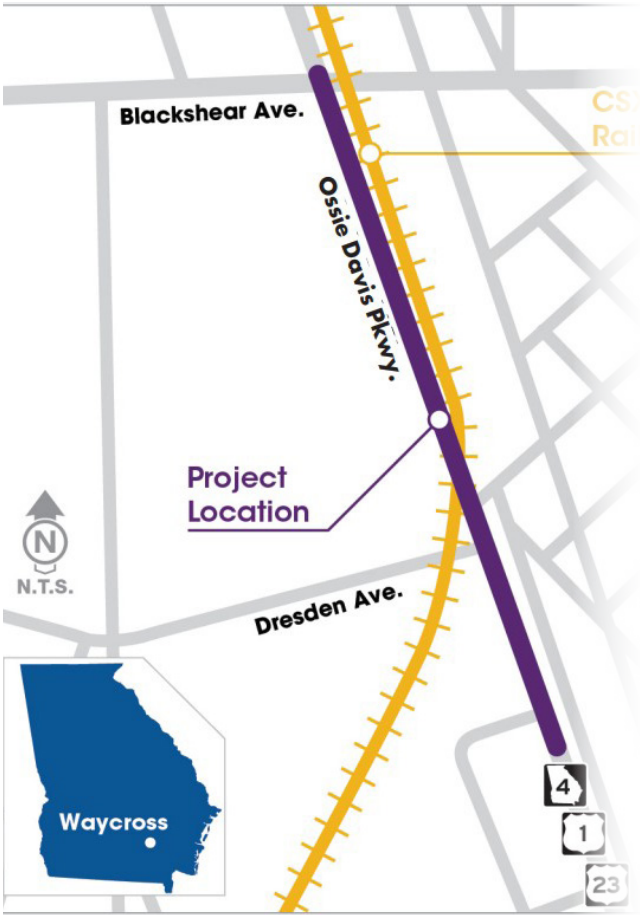
U.S. 84 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT OVER SATILLA RIVER AND SATILLA OVERFLOW

Construction is underway on the replacement of the U.S. 84 bridges over the Satilla River and Satilla overflow at the Ware/Pierce County line near the City of Waycross. These Georgia DOT bridges are a vital part of the community's infrastructure. The bridges being replaced were originally built in 1923 and overhauled and widened in 1982.

In October 2025, a significant milestone was achieved ahead of schedule. Traffic was successfully shifted to the newly constructed side of the bridges, a crucial step in keeping this vital artery in the region moving. With one lane in each direction maintained throughout the construction of the new bridge, the \$44.8 million project is on track for completion in 2027.



U.S. 84 bridge over the Satilla River



U.S. 1 RAILROAD OVERPASS BRIDGE IN WAYCROSS

This project will construct a grade separation for two CSX Railroad at-grade crossings on U.S. 1 Business/Ossie Davis Parkway, located between Berlin Street and Blackshear Avenue in Waycross. A bridge will be built to carry Ossie Davis Parkway over these two railroad crossings, following the existing centerline of the parkway and utilizing an off-site detour during construction. The project is to be let in fourth quarter of 2025 and estimated duration of the construction is approximately 36 months.

The grade separation project is deemed necessary as it was identified as a top priority in the Waycross/Ware County Multi-Modal Transportation Study. The study noted significant delays for motorists on US 1 Business/Ossie Davis Parkway caused by slow-moving trains blocking the existing at-grade railroad crossings.

Waycross is home to Rice Yard, which is CSX’s largest and second-busiest carload classification yard. At Rice Yard, arriving train cars are separated, sorted, and assembled into new trains destined for various locations. This project will address the railroad tracks that many trains cross when entering or leaving the yard.



EFFINGHAM PARKWAY PROJECT UPDATE

The Effingham Parkway, sponsored by Effingham County, is a significant project that will not only provide access to the Savannah Gateway Industrial Hub but also serve as a vital parallel route to State Route (SR) 21. This 6.4-mile-long project, starting at SR 30 in Chatham County, approximately 1.5 miles west of SR 21, and ending at Blue Jay Road in Effingham County, approximately 3.2 miles west of SR 21, will play a crucial role in enhancing regional connectivity and making our community more interconnected.



This \$57.7 million infrastructure investment includes the construction of a two-lane roadway with six bridges, along with two roundabouts at Goshen Road and Blue Jay Road in Effingham and Chatham Counties. The project is anticipated to be completed by the third quarter of 2026.





16/95 IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE

The I-16/I-95 Improvement Projects, part of Georgia DOT's Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP), is reconstructing the critical I-16 and I-95 interchange in Chatham County and widening the I-16 corridor from I-95 to I-516. Once completed, the projects will ease congestion, improve travel times, and increase safety and travel efficiency for the growing passenger and freight vehicle traffic in the area.

As construction nears completion, crews have opened the new third lane on I-16 eastbound and westbound west of Chatham Parkway, increasing capacity within the corridor. Traffic has shifted to the new I-95 bridge within the interchange and the new collector-distributor lane system has opened.

Construction of bridges within the I-16/I-516 interchange, lighting, and final punch list items are ongoing. The project was on track to reach substantial completion at the end of last year.



Top Photo: I-95 northbound view at bridge over I-16

Bottom Photo: I-16 eastbound view at I-16/I-95 interchange

U.S. 17/STATE ROUTE 404 SPUR AT SAVANNAH RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

The U.S. 17/State Route (SR) 404 Spur Bridge at Savannah River Crossing Project aims to examine future, long-term improvement alternatives for the existing U.S. 17/SR 404 Spur Bridge over the Savannah River. Although structurally sound, the bridge's clearance limits a generation of ever-larger ships from navigating beneath the bridge to access the Port of Savannah's terminals, located upriver from the bridge.

In 2022, a feasibility study was conducted to identify a solution to the capacity limitation of the bridge. Two options were considered viable. The first is to build a new bridge with higher clearance than the current bridge, which would make the new U.S. 17 bridge one of the tallest in the world. The second option would build two tunnels west of the existing bridge and underneath the river. Either option would facilitate removal of the existing bridge. Partial funding for the right-of-way is set for 2028, but future design and construction phases has not been identified at this time.

In early 2025, Georgia DOT met with stakeholders and conducted public engagement activities for the proposed project.



U.S. 17/State Route 404 SPUR over the Savannah River.

U.S. 17/STATE ROUTE 404 SPUR BRIDGE MAJOR MAINTENANCE PROJECT

This project will replace the cables, bridge bearing and joints as part of planned maintenance for U.S. 17/State Route 404 Spur Bridge, commonly known as the Talmadge Bridge. Project teams are also exploring shortening the cables to reprofile the bridge to achieve a higher vertical navigational clearance to help address bridge accessibility for larger ships. Following the installation of a new glare screen in late 2024, work continues the project's final design and procurement of the new cables and stays. Heavy construction is anticipated to start in the first quarter of 2026.



U.S. 17/State Route 404 SPUR over the Savannah River.

HOULIHAN AND MIDDLE RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS OPEN TO TRAFFIC

This project replaced two bridges over the Savannah and Middle Rivers in Port Wentworth. The modern bridges were constructed parallel and just north of the old structures and feature wider shoulders, with the new Houlihan bridge having a higher profile for additional waterway clearance. The historic Houlihan Bridge, the state's last working swing bridge, was replaced by a new structure over the Savannah River, which opened to traffic in July 2024. The new Middle River bridge opened in April 2025. With both bridges currently open to traffic, Georgia DOT crews are in the process of taking down the old bridges with no disruption to traffic.



Houlihan Bridge



SAFETY EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Georgia DOT is committed to achieving zero fatalities on the state's roadways. The loss of even one life on Georgia's roadways is unacceptable. The more than 4000 GDOT employees work diligently to deliver a safe, resilient transportation network that supports the state's future growth. As part of that commitment, we often promote safety with our construction projects, but another large component of the department's safety strategy is education.

KEEP GEORGIA SAFE

The Keep Georgia Safe program, created by Georgia DOT, is a free roadway safety program for Georgia students in grades K-12. The program began in 2022 and has reached nearly one million students statewide. Between 2022 - 2024, there were nearly 5,000 roadway fatalities in Georgia. That is far too many individuals – friends, parents, children, aunts, uncles, siblings and grandparents - losing their lives in preventable crashes. The top five contributing factors associated with fatality and serious injury crashes over the past 10 years in Georgia are distraction, failure to yield, impairment, speed and disregard for stop signs or traffic signals. It is important to note that multiple contributing factors can be associated with each crash.

The goal of the program is to arm and empower the next generation with knowledge to help them form safe habits and to remind and often retrain the older generation about the importance of roadway safety. Materials are aligned to Georgia Department of Education standards and apply real-world scenarios and safety solutions to lead to a culture of safer roadway users. Teachers can access classroom ready materials to introduce and teach students about the importance of their safety as well as the safety of those around them.

In elementary grades, a popular game-based platform Kahoot! is utilized in classrooms challenging students with safety topic themed quizzes and creating opportunities for learning and discussions about the topics. Teachers and students can plan a virtual road trip to highlighted travel destinations around the state. Each selected destination is integrated with safety games and puzzles for students to interact with as they travel. All third-grade classrooms get a printed activity book to utilize in the classroom. Teachers



receive a classroom poster reminding students what roadway safety is and the five things they can do to make an impact by making safe decisions. Students can also design their own roundabout, learn about safe intersections and create their own billboard with important safety messaging by completing the lesson plans.

For middle and high schoolers, popular game-based in-classroom quizzes cover more challenging topics (e.g., fatalities) and use more direct and age-appropriate language. For instance, the in-classroom lesson plans for these students focus on how to properly write a letter to leadership about solutions and regulations, empowering them to actively get involved in the changes they would like to see on Georgia roads. Students also learn about inertia and speed, how to create public service announcements appealing to their age group, and what driving safely means to them. The posters they receive implore students to take the “Say NO to Driving Distractions ” pledge, and explore how students can prevent becoming a statistic by understanding that choices they make behind the wheel matter. And to further reach students where they are an intense, palm-sweating, anxiety-filled online-and mobile-friendly distracted driving game was created to help middle- and high school-aged students to fully understand how dangerous and difficult distracted driving is. A series of six videos, for use by all grade levels, is hosted by Thomas Bussey, a Georgia teacher. The videos cover an array of subject matter, from the history of seatbelts and their importance to what a distracted brain looks like to the impact of speeding.

Each year, the program is reassessed by GDOT staff in the Office of Strategic Communications and the safety team within Traffic Operations. Safety trends, crash data analysis and in classroom teacher and student feedback are used to refine focus areas or discussion points, and new content is added to build upon previous years and lessons. To learn more about the comprehensive Keep Georgia Safe program scan the QR Code.



Safety is Georgia DOT's #1 priority!

Georgia Department of Transportation

ARRIVE ALIVE



KEEP
GEORGIA
SAFE

DRIVE ALERT
ARRIVE ALIVE



Railroad Safety



Work Zone
Safety Week



General Office 600 West Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, GA 30339

GDOT District 5 - 204 North Highway 301 Jesup, GA 31598

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